

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Planting Gardens for Monarch Butterflies

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

In the wake of dramatically declining populations, last year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was asked to place the monarch butterfly on the endangered species list, beginning a process of reviewing data and scientific literature to determine if listing is warranted.

However, people aren't waiting for that final decision, and instead are proactively working to boost monarch numbers. The Asheville-based Monarch Rescue is among those leading the charge in the Southern Appalachians, funded in part by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Monarchs in the eastern United States migrate from Mexico to as far north as Canada. When travelling north with the spring, a single butterfly doesn't make the entire journey, rather they lay eggs and give rise to a new generation which continues the migration. Monarch caterpillars feed only on milkweed plants, meaning milkweed is needed along the entire migration route. In fact, decline in the amount of milkweed on the landscape is considered a significant contributor to the monarch's decline. In response, Monarch Rescue is organizing milkweed planting efforts across western North Carolina.

During May and June, Monarch Rescue has organized fifteen milkweed planting events at schools, libraries, and other public spaces. To learn more, visit [Monarch Rescue dot org](http://MonarchRescue.org).

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.